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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Radio Service
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT Monday, August 7, 1939.

Subject: "SUMMER BITING INSECTS." Information from the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine.

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Life in the open has a poetic allure for most of us, but sometimes when we plan a camping trip or even a picnic, we neglect to look into the insect life of our chosen locality. Perhaps mosquitoes, chiggers, or ticks have prior rights there; or black flies are in season where the trout fishing is best; or punkies-no-see-ums- are swarming near the river resort we like.

Even if we stay right at home we may be stung by wasps, hornets or yellow jackets, or bitten by bedbugs, fleas or spiders. So I have asked the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine to give us some information on how to avoid being annoyed by these various insect pests and what to do for the bites. Here's what I have learned:

Taking out-of-doors insects first,- mosquitoes probably head the list for sheer annoyance. In some parts of the country mosquitoes spread yellow fever or dengue fever or malaria. But mostly mosquitoes just bite, unless one is protected by a good repellant rubbed on the skin, such as oil of citronella, spirits of camphor, pine oil, or pennyroyal.

Control of mosquitoes is largely a community measure, and great improvement has been made in some of the worst regions, such as the Panama Canal Zone, the northeastern part of N. J., or the Flushing swamp where the World's Fair is now established. One thing that the individual householder can do is to screen the house thoroughly with screening of 16 to 18 mesh wire. The 16 mesh screening will not keep out very small mosquitoes unless it is painted lightly with kerosene or

oil of citronella to repel them.

Where rain barrels and water tanks are necessary they should be screened, and no old tin cans, bottles or other receptacles that might hold water and furnish a breeding ground for mosquitoes should be tolerated near the home.

As a palliative for mosquito bites, entomologists prefer moist soap, rubbed gently on the puncture. Others recommend ammonia, alcohol, or glycerine.

Next to mosquitoes, chiggers or red bugs give most trouble at this time of year in many parts of the country. Men who work in woods or underbrush or grassy areas should wear leather leggins or high-top boots. Before going out in chigger territory it is well to dust the body, legs, and underwear with flowers of sulphur. This is an inexpensive powder sold by druggists.

Strong kitchen soap is the remedy for chigger bites. After coming back from any expedition where one has been exposed to chiggers, take a hot bath promptly. Lather the body freely with medicated or yellow soap, letting the lather dry on the skin for 15 minutes before removing. Scrub well during the bath to dislodge the chiggers as much as possible. Treat bites with ammonia water, strong salt water, soda water or cooling ointments, but don't scratch them.

Wood ticks- may carry Rocky Mountain spotted fever, or rabbit fever (tularaemia). A tick bite doesn't necessarily mean that the person bitten will develop one of these diseases, but it's well after exposure to a ticky area, to thoroughly examine the head, body and clothing for ticks. If a tick is found attached, it should be quickly and carefully removed with a pair of tweezers, and destroyed by dropping in kerosene or boiling water. The point of attachment should be cauterized with a small quantity of carbolic acid, silver nitrate, or iodine.

The common house fly is not a biting pest, but it is a dangerous disease carrier. The stable flys can be very annoying by it's vicious bites. House screens protect against all the larger flies. The little biting midges called "sand flies", or "punkies" or "no-see-ums" comprise about 30 species of tiny blood-sucking insects.

They are so small they go right through ordinary screen wire, and repellents rubbed on the skin do very little good. Concentrated pyrethrum extract in light lubricating oil painted on window screens keeps them out for several hours. A pyrethrum spray gives temporary relief but the real cure is getting rid of their breeding places, such as rot holes in trees. Near salty tidal water stretches, where sand flies swarm in great numbers, community effort is needed.

The northern season for black flies is now about over. Hunters and fishermen usually rub the skin before going out with a mixture of kerosene and oil of pennyroyal.

If wasps or hornets have built nests in undesirable places on the house or nearby trees, it is necessary to knock the nests down and destroy them. Large hornet nests can be handled safely by plugging the holes with cotton soaked in chloroform or benzol. Put another wad of cotton soaked with anaesthetic in a box or garbage can with a tight lid. Cut the nest down with a long bladed knife, dropping it into the can and closing promptly. The entire colony will be killed.

Of indoors biting pests the bedbug is the most trying. Stray bedbugs get into perfectly clean homes from accidental contact with people in stores or streetcars, or on laundry or other packages. Bad infestations are best controlled by fumigation, which must be done by a professional exterminator. But when only a few bedbugs are found, the bedstead, mattress, walls and baseboard of the room can be gone over carefully, several times, with kerosene, pyrethrum fly spray, or even boiling water, if it won't hurt the bedstead. There's a government leaflet on bedbugs and what to do about them. You can get it by writing to the U.S.Department of Agriculture, asking for leaflet 146-L.

Fleas are discussed in another leaflet, No. 152-L. Naphthalene flakes can be used as a fumigant for a room infested with fleas, if it can be kept closed from 24 to 48 hours. Use about 5 pounds of flakes to a room. Other measures for getting rid of fleas are described in the leaflet.

People sometimes worry about spider bites, but entomologists say that few spiders bite human beings. The dreaded black widow spider seldom enters houses, but if disturbed in outsheds, woodpiles, out-door toilets, culverts, manholes or similar places it may bite. Anyone bitten should be taken promptly to a physician. Centipedes look terrifying, and are often seen about the house. They prey upon soft bodied insects and hardly ever bite.

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